

Message Text

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ACTION AF-06

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 AID-05 PC-01 PM-04 NSC-05 SP-02

SS-15 CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 PA-01 USIA-06

PRS-01 /066 W

----- 040378

R 101045Z SEP 75

FM AMEMBASSY NIAMEY

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1680

INFO AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN

IUTABO/AMEMBASSY BAMAKO 1118

AMEMBASSY COTONOU

AMEMBASSY LAGOS

AMEMBASFV LOME

AMEMBASSY OUAGADOUGOU

AMEMBASSY PARIS

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE NIAMEY 3574

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ILTN, NG

SUBJ: PRESIDENT KOUNTCHE'S VISIT TO LOME AND NIGER'S LANDLOCKED
STATUS

1. PRESIDENT KOUNTCHE MADE A QUICK TWENTY-FOUR HOUR
VISIT TO TOGO SEPTEMBER 6 - 7 TO PARTICIPATE IN WHAT
HAS BEEN LOCALLY BILLED AS A SUMMIT MEETING TO
DISCUSS QUOTE MATTERS OF COMMON INTEREST UNQUOTE
WITH EMPHASIS ON COMMUNICATIONS POLICY.

2. OFFICIAL COMMUNIQUE AS REPORTED IN LOCAL PRESS
APPEARS TO HAVE BEEN USUAL BOILER PLATE OF AFRICAN
ISSUES. HOWEVER, AS KOUNTCHE MADE CLEAR AT AIRPORT
PRESS CONFERENCE ON RETURN FROM LOME SEPTEMBER 7, HIS
MAIN INTEREST AT MEETING WAS TO EXPLORE WITH HIS
NEIGHBORS WAYS TO IMPROVE COMMUNICATIONS TO
OUTSIDE WORLD WHICH WOULD PROVIDE RELIEF TO
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TRANSPORTATION PROBLEMS AND ESCALATING COSTS

NIGER FACES BECAUSE OF ITS LANDLOCKED STATUS. NOTING THAT LACK OF ADEQUATE COMMUNICATIONS INFRASTRUCTURE WAS A SERIOUS HANDCAP TO GON'S DEVELOPMENT EFFORTS, KOUNTCHE SAID IT WAS NATURAL FOR NIGER NOT TO RELY SOLELY ON TRADITIONAL ACCESS ROUTES (DAHOMY) AND TO LOOK ALSO TO ALTERNATIVES IN TOGO AND IVORY COAST. REASON HE HAD GONE TO LOME WAS TO INSURE THAT NIGER HAD ADDITIONAL WINDOWS TO OUTSIDE WORLD, ESPECIALLY AT TIME WHEN NIGER WAS ABOUT TO START DEVELOPMENT OF ITS PHOSPATE DEPOSITS. HE INDICATED NIGER'S NEIGHBORS WERE GENERALLY SYMPATHETIC TO STRATEGY OF DEVELOPING CLOSER LINKS WITH LOME BY ROAD AND TRAIN AND FROM NIAMEY TO RAILROAD FROM OUAGADOUGOU TO ABIDJAN.

3. COMMENT: WE UNDERSTAND KOUNTCHE'S DECISION TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS GATHERING IS MEASURE OF HIS IRRITATION WITH DAHOMEY WITH WHICH RELATIONS ARE CURRENTLY STRAINED. HE IS ANNOYED AND FRUSTRATED BY TRANSPORT SITUATION IN DAHOMEY AND IS DETERMINED TO FIND OTHER OUTLETS AND TO LESSEN NIGER'S DEPENDENCE ON DAHOMEY. WE CAN EXPECT TO HEAR MORE FROM NIGER ON THIS SUBJECT. END COMMENT. HECK

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Margaret P. Grafeld
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TAGS: OVIP, NG, (KOUNTCHE, SEYNI)
To: STATE
Type: TE
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